with different genotypes. Genotypes 1-5 were tested for immunoreactivity by the NS4 Mosaic EIA. The results indicated that the only specimens which did not react to the mosaic protein were those that tested negative for anti-NS4 activity by MATRIX immunoassay. These data indicate that the mosaic protein detected anti-NS4 activity in each of the genotypes tested and was 100% concordant with MATRIX immunoassay (Figure 25).--

IN THE CLAIMS

Please amend claim 13 as follows:

13. (Twice amended) A nucleic acid encoding a protein comprising more than two antigenic peptides from the same domain from different genotypes of hepatitis C virus.

REMARKS

Claims 13, 16-19 are pending in this application and currently under examination. Claim 13 has been amended to recite correctly the invention. Support for the substitution of the phrase "more than two" for the word "plurality" can be found at p. 18, lines 19-26 and p. 27, lines 18-23. No new matter is believed added.

In light of the following remarks, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the patentability of the pending claims.

I. Objection to the use of trademark MATRIX in the specification

The specification has been amended in accordance with MPEP 608.01(v) to reflect the use of the trademark MATRIX (Abbott Laboratories). This trademark refers to an immunoassay used in the field of hepatitis C research to assess the presence or absence of hepatitis C proteins in a given sample. As such, the specification was amended to identify generically the trademark as an immunoassay.